/49 cont./

846 After the delivery the mother remains on her bed, and the husband cares for her in the same manner as at the end of her pregnancy. The husband tries to relieve her of all work. The length of the confinement depends on economic circumstances. [556] Among poor people it often lasts only a few days, among prosperous women it sometimes extends up to thirty days. In any case, among the Meau, it is prolonged as much as possible, since it is believed that the longer the confinement the healthier and stronger the woman will become and the more children she will therefore be able to bear.

I was unable to find any traces of the couvade among the Meau. On the other hand, Abadie (1) reported that the custom

1. Page 165.

occurs among some Meau tribes in China. He adds that in Tonkin this custom is not practiced, but that one could observe practices that seem to be derived from it. The author then mentions as such practices: "Vegetarian diet for the husband; a prohibition against his being absent or crossing the heights that form the boundary toward the neighboring valleys." Much more convincing is an illustration of the couvade given by Chang-Kong Chiu in his Kultur der Miao-tse (2) and the illustration in

2. Page 59

the Album Gotha (3). In these cases, however, it is not en-

3. Reproduced in the Ostasiatischen Zeitschrift, 1916, p. 281.

tirely certain whether these illustrations actually refer to the Meau or perhaps to another Chinese mountain tribe.

845 The Meau are especially happy about the birth of twins [777] and regard it as an omen of good luck. They even try to raise [732] weaklings, deformed children, and cripples. The hard struggle for survival, however, almost always prevents their growing up.

/90 cont./

577 836 he has been, the boy will answer that he /91/ was delayed on the hunt. The girl will say that she spent the time looking for some object, or that she stayed overnight with a girl friend, or give some other such excuse. When I quite innocently asked a young man who was returning from his three-day excursion where he had been, he replied in all seriousness: "Wild pigs have devastated our rice field, and I lay in wait for them. They were too clever, however, and I could not catch them." At the same time, his father, who had overheard our conversation, winked at me and later whispered into my ear: "He returned dead-tired from a visit to his girl."

581 For the Meau, the decisive factor in the selection of a female partner is not the social position, but the physical characteristics of the girl. When I asked a Meau who would [732] [143] marry a stupid girl -- it was a case of cretinism, which occurs rather frequently -- he answered me briefly and characteristically: "A stupid man," even though in this case the girl belonged to a powerful and rich sib. The fact that girls at the [585] [614] moment of marriage completely give up their connection with their sib and enter the sib of the husband may play an important role in this. Among the girls of the Meau, on the other hand, even though they are not concerned specifically about the social position of the man, there are other significant factors that are not connected with sexuality. This is indicated in the reply of girls whom I questioned about the type of man they would like to have. In one form or another the answer was always: "Clever and strong, in order to master life." Not a single one put any value on a handsome or "dashing" man. The closeness to nature of the Meau permits the girls to see clearly what proficiency in the primeval forest life means. To be sure, I never met a single incompetent man among the Meau. The stern laws of nature would soon cause him to disappear fron this society.

595 833 513 Married people customarily have sexual union at night in their bedroom. In answer to my question as to what the other wives do if the husband, who shares his bed with all of his wives, bestows his attention on one, my informant said: "The others

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/232 cont./

A M 164 pock-marked Meau. Abadie (1), too, noted the frequent occurrence

1. Page 159.

of smallpox:

M 164 731 744 "The Meau are frequently afflicted with smallpox, but they react wonderfully to the simplest medicines. In 1911, a severe epidemic raged in a very large village in the Tha-Long region and caused five to six deaths a day. All the inhabitants were inoculated on one day, the aged and the children, the healthy and the sick. From this moment on there was not another death." Such results are of course, highly gratifying, but it is /233/ somewhat disconcerting to see inoculation counted among the "simplest medicines"!

A M 164 732 As among most of the mountain peoples of Farther India, struma is common among the Meau and Akha, which Marabail (1)

1. Page 463.

confirms for the Meau, and likewise cretinism. These ailments are more frequent among the Meau than among the Akha. Moreover, in both tribes the women are more frequently and more severely ill than the men. Some of the cretins found in every M 164 732 [753] Meau village do not seem to have been afflicted by true cretinism, but by epidemic meningitis and similar diseases. At any rate, the Meau told me on several occasions that these persons had been quite normal as children, but had suddenly been stricken with fever and were then tortured terribly by evil spirits. Since that time their minds were affected.

A M 164 [158] Mental diseases and paralysis caused by nervous or rheumatic disorders are relatively frequent. I was unable to find syphilis; to be sure, it may have been spread among the Meau in some places by Chinese traders, but it has caused no obvious devastation. Gonorrhea occurs more frequently, but still rarely among the Meau, and it seems to be completely absent among the Akha, which can probably be traced back to the strict tribal endogamy among this people. I could find no

/266 cont./

592 House 8: The father of the house: personal name, Yin;
621 family name, Sen Sun. He is not related to the other villagers
[551] and allegedly moved here only because good fields could be
laid out here. He looks cretinous, and this is said to have hap-
[164] pened after an attack of fever (meningitis?), but he is a good
[732] worker, and with his daughter of about 20 he lives in peace with
the other inhabitants of Nam Fa. /Ills. 52-57 appear here on
unnumbered pages./

34 /267/ Among the Meau in Thailand, we were able to dis-
tinguish five house-types:

1. Dwelling houses,
2. Granary housing,
3. Stables,
4. Smithies,
5. Rice-field huts.

There are no houses for special purposes, such as cook-houses, guardhouses, inns, spirit houses, or such for cult associations. Except for the smithies, there is no artisan's housing.

1. Dwelling Houses

342 The main entrance of the houses have to lie, not in a
definite direction, but on the valley side, in order to prevent
the water rushing down the slope from entering the house. On
351 the mountain side of each house there is a drainage ditch which
guides the masses of water from the tropical storms past the
house and into a gutter, in which it then, as in a brook, plunges
into the valley. /Figs. 59-62 appear here./

342 When one steps into a Meau dwelling, he at first gets a
[353] very cheerless impression because of the darkness prevailing in
it and the smoke-blackening which covers all the walls and
furnishings. Also, corresponding with the previously described
seminomadism of the mountain peoples, not too much effort
and care are used in the construction of the houses. Boards,
[322] beams, supporting posts, partitioning walls, and all parts of the
[335] roof are merely roughly hewn with the ax and show marked
[824] irregularities. As binding materials, rattan and bamboo are
[353] used exclusively; sawing, nailing, or glueing is unknown. On
the other hand, posts and beams are joined in various ways (Figs.
59-62). With a longer stay, however, and more precise

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 369]